

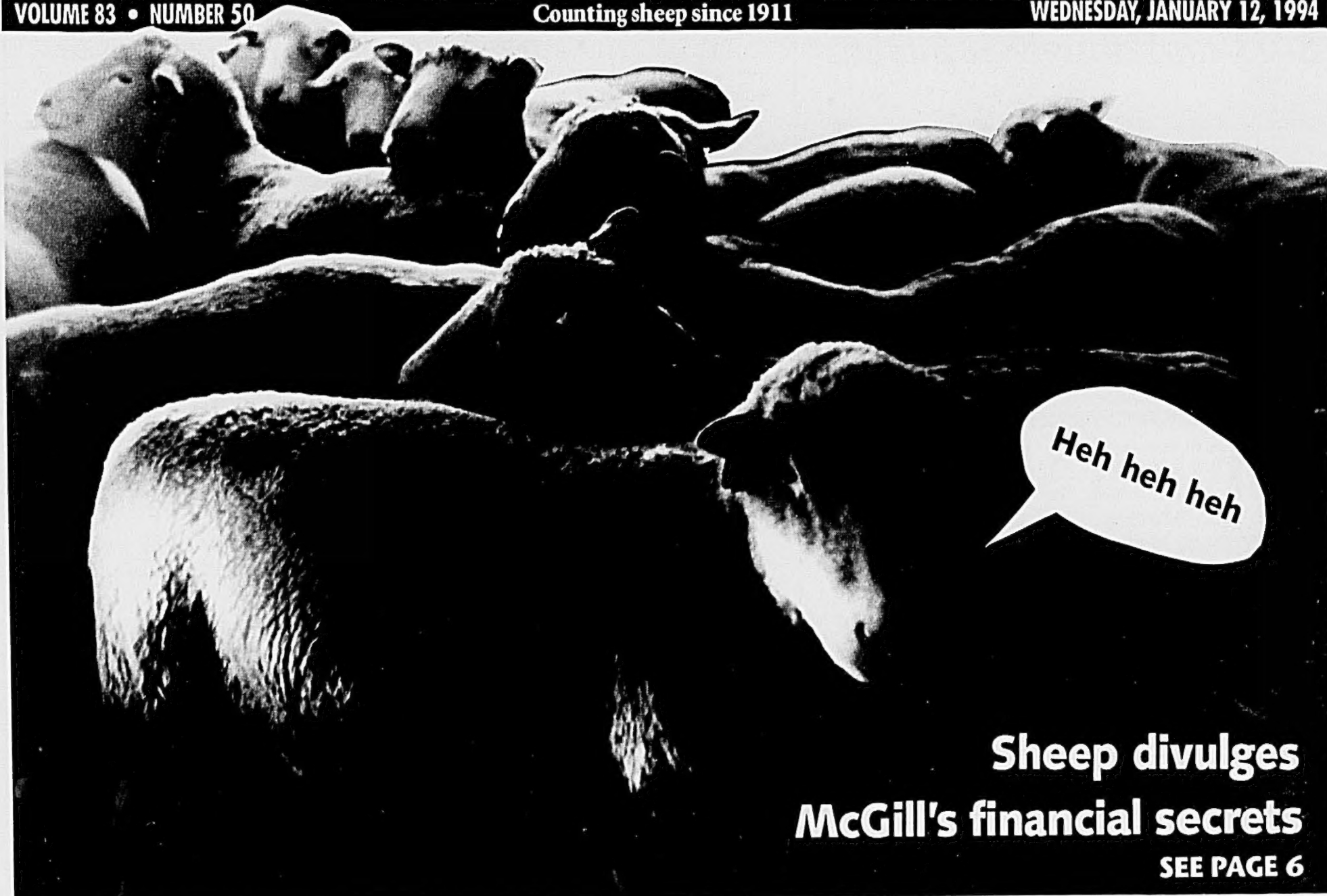


THE MCGILL DAILY

VOLUME 83 • NUMBER 50

Counting sheep since 1911

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 12, 1994



**Sheep divulges
McGill's financial secrets**
SEE PAGE 6

McGill professor fights racism

Ethnic studies program emphasizes cultural diversity

BY GWYN WANSBROUGH

Something that you won't find posted on many other doors of offices in the Leacock building are letters addressing the professor inside as a "dirty fucking scumbag".

Room 942 is the office of Professor Morton Weinfeld, chair of the Canadian Ethnic Studies Program, and member of the Canadian Multiculturalism Advising Committee to the Minister of Multiculturalism. His frequent writings on issues concerning immigration in Canada attract criticism from those who don't share his view that cultural diversity is one of Canada's strengths.

"The hate mail is a useful pedagogic tool," said Professor Weinfeld, referring to the letters posted on his door. One of these letters informs him that "we have right-wing organizations to deal with shit heads like you."

"Students can't believe there are people out there who are poten-

tially sick racists," said Weinfeld.

"These are important and interesting issues that need to be addressed," said the professor. "I hope that there are students who also agree with me."

Weinfeld was approached by the Dean of Arts to create a program at McGill dealing with the various ethnic, racial and linguistic groups and related concepts of multiculturalism and diversity within the Canadian context.

The Canadian Ethnic Studies Program is an interdisciplinary minor drawing from courses in sociology, anthropology, geography, history and political science, and is intended to provide a focused area of study within Canadian studies.

Currently there are six students enrolled in the program, a number which Weinfeld hopes will grow. Student interest in the subject matter is confirmed by professor Leonard Moore, a history professor

who has taught a course on race and ethnicity in the United States at McGill for two years.

"I thought it was an important

**"we have
right-wing
organizations
to deal with
shit heads like
you."**

**— from a letter to Dr
Morton Weinfeld**

course we didn't offer, a course I thought students would be interested in and I have not been disappointed in that assessment," said

Moore. Enrollment jumped from 48 the first year the class was offered to 125 students the following year.

Carmen James, a U3 North American Studies student, took the course last year because she didn't know enough about the subject material. "You can't study the history of North America without a good understanding of race and ethnicity," said James. "It also contributes to a broader awareness and understanding of economic political and social problems faced by the two countries."

Weinfeld points out that multiculturalism in Canada is considered an important model for the rest of the world.

"This is not empty rhetoric," Weinfeld explained. "I myself was in Moscow where they are wrestling with racial and ethnic diversity. Canada is clearly looked to as a leader in handling these issues. Our programs are looked to for possible

models."

Both Moore and Weinfeld agree that the value of offering courses and a program in Ethnic Studies to students will have positive results.

"We are still struggling to extend the Canadian dream of justice and prosperity equally to all citizens," said Weinfeld, "and although we are making progress, we still have a long way to go. I believe that the more that young people are exposed to these issues in a rigorous scholastic fashion, the more they can work to help these objectives."

Last year the minor program included a number of campus activities including a lecture series on ethnicity. On the agenda for this year is a symposium on minorities and the media, which is scheduled for the spring.

The Canadian Ethnic Studies minor can be taken alongside any major program at McGill.

The Daily needs an office co-ordinator. If you're interested, drop by Shatner B-03 and answer a phone.

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INFORMATION 398-7011

The Daily Statement of Principles

1 The fundamental goal of the McGill Daily shall be to serve as a critical and constructive forum for the exchange of ideas and information about McGill University and related communities.

2 Within this optic, the staff of the Daily recognizes that all events and issues are inherently political, involving relations of social and economic power. Further, we recognize that at present power is unevenly distributed, especially (but not solely) on the bases of gender, age, social class, race, sexuality, disability and cultural identity.

3 We also recognize that keeping silent about this situation helps to perpetuate it. Instead, to help correct these inequities, to the best of its staff's abilities, the Daily should depict and analyse power relations accurately in its coverage.

4 As an autonomous student newspaper, relatively free from commercial and other controls, the Daily can best serve its purposes by examining issues and events most media ignore.

5 In particular, it should deal with the role post-secondary education plays in constructing and maintaining the current order. It should also assist students and other groups working for change, within a critical framework, with the aim of empowering and giving a voice to individuals and communities marginalized on the bases of the criteria mentioned in paragraph 2.

6 The Daily's methods should be both educative and active, as determined democratically by its staff.

7 Finally, we recognize that the Daily must remain accessible to the student community it comes from, and should abide by an ethic of fairness (as defined by the Canadian University Press code of ethics) while maintaining its autonomy.

— the above principles are part of Bylaw 1 of the constitution
of the Daily Publications Society



WHAT'S HOT

Anatomy Council as part of S.U.S. Winter Fest Comedy Night. 20h00 tonight in the Alley, presenting Alastair McAlastair, Scott Salcanbridge, J.P. Bonnet, and McGill Improv. Cost \$3.

The McGill Co-ed Medical Fraternity is holding general meetings today at 13h00 and 14h30 in Shatner 425. All students welcome.

The McGill Choral Society, a non-auditioning choir and McGill's largest club, is now accepting members for the Winter '94 term. Our spring performance will include Carmina Burana and Jesus Christ Superstar! Join in the fun this and every Wednesday at the Strathcona Music Building, room L310, 19h30 - 22h00.

McGill Players' Theatre presents The Goddess is a Shopping Bag Lady. January 11-15, and January 18-22. (Saturday, January 15, women audience only). Prices \$5 students, \$10 regular. Information/reservations 398-6813.

Need to choose a major? Choose an elective? Arts Undergraduate Society and Science Undergraduate Society present Peer Academic Advising. Union Building,

room 107/108. 12h00 - 16h00. Find out about courses and professors from students in upper years.

Walksafe General meeting, Thursday January 13 in Leacock 132 at 19h00. Mandatory for all new and returning volunteers.

The Global Cooperation Network of Q-PIRG has invited Pia Gianneschi of Bridgehead Coffee's Ottawa office to speak about this OXFAM project. Bridgehead coffee is grown on worker-run cooperatives in Nicaragua, which pay fair wages and shun the exploitation of multinational cooperations. 18h00, Thursday January 13 in the Alley. Call Chris for more info at 282-0229.

General meetings for Food Not Bombs every Thursday at 19h00. This is a community group which collects and provides free vegetarian food to hungry people. Librairie Alternative, 2035 St. Laurent. Call Chris for more information at 282-0229.

Can we end violence against women? Come to the next International Socialists meeting. Concordia University, Hall Building, Rm. H771. 19h30 Wednesday January 19.

Ontario miles ahead in integrating midwifery

BY GILLIAN DONALD

The long-awaited legalization of midwifery in Québec may just mean business as usual for obstetricians in the province. While the province has attempted to set up pilot projects to integrate midwifery into the medical system, hospitals have refused to cooperate with the training and licensing process.

"The Alliance [of Medical Federations (AMF) of Québec] recommends that all Québec physicians, whether practicing in offices, Community Health Service Centres (CLSCs) or hospitals, refuse to cooperate in any project related to the Act respecting the practice of midwifery within the framework of pilot projects," stated one AMF bulletin to its members last spring.

The AMF has lived up to its word.

But Lucie Hamelin, a midwife from the Alliance Québécoise des Sages Femmes Praticiennes (AQSFP) said the establishment of these pilot projects would be a positive step for the midwives and pregnant women in Québec. "The legalization of midwifery is all we want, pure and simple."

Hamelin added, "If [midwifery] is legalized then there must be a university education programme for training."

Much of the controversy around the medical establishment's cooperation with the midwives, centres around the lack of formal training for midwives in the province.

Presently, there is no formal school of midwifery in Québec and the practice of midwifery is illegal. While Bill 4 authorized the practice of midwifery in theory last year, Québec has only licensed a very small number of midwives to date.

Instead, the Ministry of Health has set up eight pilot projects to test the licensing process. Four of these projects were set to take place in hospitals, which have refused to host them. Four more pilot projects are currently taking place in Centre Local de Services Communautaires (CLSCs).

Maggie Moise, a midwife from the Association des Sages Femmes du Québec (ASFQ), is waiting accreditation to participate in a pilot project. She said that the problem with the pilot projects is that Québec provides no formal training for midwives, but only an evaluation process for midwives who have been trained elsewhere.

Moise received her training in England and said that the other members of the ASFQ were trained in other countries, like Sweden and Denmark, where the practice of midwifery is legal and established.

In the absence of a training program, Québec has set up an evaluation process that requires that all midwives must pass a written exam and a clinical and oral exam, administered by the Centre d'Évaluation des Sciences de la Santé de l'Université de Laval. If both exams are passed, the midwife becomes accredited to participate in a pilot programme.

The pilot programmes are sched-



Talking shop over some Sanka

uled to continue until 1998, after which recommendations will be made to establish midwifery in Québec legally.

Moise, who has sat through the licensing exams, said, "The clinical and oral exam is a good exam relating to midwifery but the written exam was more medical based."

The licensing process has not met with support from all midwives in Québec. In addition to the ASFQ, whose members have midwifery

qualifications from an institution, the Alliance Québécoise des Sages Femmes Praticiennes (AQSFP) represent *autodidactes*, or self-taught midwives.

Members of the AQSFP learn from other midwives and from books to become recognized within the association. Their training is not recognized by Québec. The AQSFP continues to practice midwifery in Québec illegally.

The AMF has been most strongly

opposed to the self-taught midwives. "We were basically opposed to the [legalization of midwifery] because it authorized the practice of medicine by non-physicians," the AMF wrote in response to the Bill legalizing midwifery.

Dr. Augustine Roy, former president of the Corporation Professionnelle des Médecins du Québec, said in response to the pilot projects, "The pilot project creates two types of obstetrics. We can-

not accept establishment of two types of obstetrics in this province. It is a question of security of the mother and baby."

But the AMF's opposition to midwifery has been increasingly questioned in light of Ontario's success with its own plan to legalize midwifery.

Last September, the first baccalaureate programme for midwifery in Canada opened at three collaborating universities in Ontario. McMaster University, Ryerson Polytechnical Institute and Laurentian University, together offer 33 positions in a four year programme condensed to three years.

The response was overwhelming. According to Jacqueline Dickie, Administrator of the Midwifery Education Programme at Laurentian University, last year there were 1500 applicants for the 33 positions.

In Ontario, the profession of midwifery is governed by the College of Ontario Midwives. The Ministry of Health has incorporated midwifery into the health system.

Duncan said, "Midwifery will eventually dramatically cut costs of obstetrics. Less technology is involved in midwifery because midwives practice the appropriate use of technology. The Caesarian section rate is very low and the use of drugs is minimal."

The midwives are not paid by the fee for service system like an obstetrician. Instead they earn a salary.

The College of Ontario Midwives has set minimum and maximum birth limits per year for the midwives to ensure that their skills are maintained and current and that a midwife does not accept too many clients.

Kathy Duncan, a midwife from the Association of Ontario Midwives, said, "The impetus for regulating certification of common practice came from midwives themselves."

The structure of the programme is approximately equally divided between classroom and clinicals. The faculty are practicing midwives.

"Government regulation of midwifery makes it available to everyone," said Duncan.

Nikki Deller, who is interested in applying to the degree program in Ontario, believes, "If you don't legalize it [midwifery] becomes an elite thing," and that the legalization gives "accessibility for pregnant teens, single mothers and women who are economically disadvantaged."

The cost of midwifery services in Québec is currently \$700-\$1000. There is no question that the incorporation of midwifery into the healthcare system makes it more accessible.

Duncan emphasized that teenage mothers "really benefit from midwifery care." They receive a lot of support from the midwives and take a more matter of fact approach to the pregnancy.

Read this article One in five Canadians can't

By JACKIE GARROW

Twenty-two per cent of adult Canadians have reading skills that are too limited to allow them to deal with the majority of written material encountered in every day life.

Volunteer groups have worked to turn this situation around, but as literacy groups have learned, teaching adults to read isn't as easy as "ABC".

Carole Chandron, co-chair of McGill Students for Literacy (MSL), said that her organization has moved away from the traditional grade-school method of reading instruction in favor of something she calls the "Language Experience Approach".

Tutors try to use the learners' words as a basis for their exercises. "This approach is quite different from the rigid formality of phonics text books and little readers we were all used to at school. In a lot of cases it allows for a more effective and approachable learning environment," Chandron said.

Since it was founded in 1988, MSL has trained students as tutors and matched them up with adults in the Montréal community who have expressed a need to improve their reading and writing skills. The "Literacy Council" currently has 55 trained volunteers.

"The learners are at various levels of reading but all come to the Literacy Council with very pragmatic concerns," said Danielle Simpson, co-chair of MSL.

"[Their] common desires include reading the drivers license preparation booklet, reading their mail, helping their children with their homework and reading want ads in the newspaper to get a better job," she said.

According to Chandron, some of their learners have turned down job offers because they knew their inability to read would catch up to them sooner or later.

So when tutors meet with their counterparts twice weekly for two hour sessions, the tutor focuses on the learners' specific wants and needs, what Simpson and Chandron call "survival skills".

But literacy training is not all about survival skills, Chandron said. "For most of these adults improving their reading ability means even more than acquiring a survival skill. Learning to read gives back to these adults a sense of empowerment and self esteem."

People who can't read often lack self esteem because of a perception that illiterate people are "dumb" or "helpless victims", Simpson and Chandron said.

But this isn't true, said Chandron. "[Illiterate people] are politically, economically and socially aware, and who for a lot of valid reasons, one being poverty, have had something that is holding

them back."

Stephanie Garrow, of World Literacy Canada in Toronto, agreed. Garrow offered two reasons for functional illiteracy in Canada.

The education system is partly to blame, she said. Due to underfunding classes are too large, and there is a lack of individualized attention and encouragement. In this environment a student who needs a little extra help gets pushed through to the next grade only to feel "dumber" and more frustrated at his/her inability to keep up.

Often, these people feel they can't pick up the lost time and they drop out, Garrow said.

Garrow also hinted at a cultural cause for illiteracy. "In a technological age where there is an increasing availability and demand for non-print mediums for communication and entertainment, like videos, nintendo, tv shows, and story book tapes there is inevitably less emphasis on picking up a book and having a good read."

As the demand for literacy training for adults continues to grow, volunteer groups like the MSL are increasingly forced to step in to fill the gap between the school system and the students.

"The reality may be that we are facing a future where there will be more and more people who can read less well," Chandron said.

COMMENT

Education or alienation?

Since I've moved away, coming home to Brussels has never been an effortless transition, a tidy seam between past and present. This Christmas, the combination of jet lag and confronting my adolescent self was intensified by a tricky third member — that of trying to understand where my high school went wrong.

In my last year of high school, two of my closest friends 'lost it'. They decided not to deal with reality anymore and retreated. One has since recovered, the other still battles with his demons. He is out of the 'loony bin' as he calls it, yet still on medication, some prescribed by his doctor and some by himself. "Why are their drugs better than mine?" he asks.

My high school, called the European School, is fairly unique in its kind. Set up in the 50's for children of European Union (EU) officials, it provides these children, who move often from country to country, with a steady school system.

European School kids come from fairly affluent families, often of mixed nationality, most are comfortable in at least three languages, yet none have a real sense of national identity. Their school is reputed to be elitist, uncaring, more like a University than a high school in its attitude towards the students.

It offers virtually no extra-curricular activities, no sports teams, few clubs. The students entertain themselves — forging signatures, rolling joints, skipping school to go to Holland for the day. It was great at the time, but in hindsight, it seems that something was missing...

Every year I come back, I discover that more and more of my schoolmates are in trouble. At least 14 people in my graduating year have spent time in mental and/or detox institutions, some temporarily and some indefinitely.

For a school which, as quoted in the Wall Street Journal, proudly claims to breed "True Europeans", these numbers are disturbing. Are they directly related to a fault within the school's administration?

Obviously several factors are at play here — affluence, for example, can lead to decadence, especially among teenagers with no responsibilities and no rules. Also, the hybrid nature of these kids' backgrounds and upbringings may complicate entry into adulthood — creating an identity without a real reference point is touch and go...

So does the school fit into all of this? While not directly at fault, does it not play a part in screwing up people's lives? The school's administration does nothing in response to the problems its students encounter — there are no advisors, no guidance counsellors, and no drug education at all (which is arguably a blessing in disguise).

While I cringe at the touchy-feely approach of many American high schools, with their catchy slogans and claustrophobic attempts to shelter students from the big bad world, the European School's nonchalance, its lack of support for any support network for its students makes no sense.

While the European School provides a fairly unique example, it does highlight several problems within the education system today. It is a system which too often ignores the real needs and concerns of students, and too often fails to incite a real desire for learning.

Liz Unna

LETTERS

NAFTA & the Environment

To the Daily:

re: Prime Minister's failure to protect Canadian wilderness (aka 'resources') from corporate claws

Among its achievements, NAFTA counts the 'harmonization' of trade regulations regarding environmental protection. Canada no longer has the option to cease exporting certain 'commodities' — water, incidentally, is a 'commodity'. Nor shall we be able to raise 'non-tariff barriers' to the export of 'commodities'. Such barriers include

environmental regulations more stringent than those of our trading partners (howdy partna!). Environmental activism will become all but impossible.

Our PM has announced today (3/12) that in "case of emergency" Canada intends to keep its 'resources' (read: wilderness!) to itself. Predictably, the USA government has already issued a statement to the effect that since no such clause exists in NAFTA we will have no such option. We're stuck. In a democracy like ours, you can expect public debate over this to die down

If NAFTA is so good for workers, why were we kept out of the negotiations?



...LETTERS

within the week (day? hour?).

Protecting wilderness from greedy Canadian bastards is hard enough as is. At this rate we shall soon be reduced to begging for scraps of the wild, sq. mile by mile. The USA will be able to legally blackmail us into selling them everything. If not, we will be violating international law (and you know how unhappy the USA is when someone does that). Any suggestions for action? Here's one: if US corporations ever dictate to us what we can and can't legislate we bomb 'em. Any objections?

Those pesky little chipmunks from,
Earth Force!

Bloody Red Cross

To the Daily:

re: "Bleed the Red Cross dry" comment (2/12/93)

Too many people are willing to say, "Okay, the Red Cross questionnaire is discriminatory...so how can we justify giving them blood?"

First, no amount of loss of life is acceptable.

Brian Walmsley
U2 BSc

Michelson Redux

To the Daily

Mary-Margaret Jones (Letters, Dec. 2), writes "LGBM challenges [the Red Cross] because [it] preserve[s] inequality." What inequality? When has anyone been denied blood products because of race, sexual orientation or religion?

The Daily welcomes letters under 300 words. Add your name, programme, year and phone number. Anonymity can be provided; talk to an editor beforehand. The Daily prints all letters provided they are not racist, sexist, homophobic, or libelous. Opinions can be expressed in the form of a Hyde Park, not more than 500 words.

Inequalities arise when privileges that are given to some are not given to others. For example, take the Daily and its 300-word limit on letters. When the Daily allows some to have letters that are over 300 words printed, but does not allow this for others, it is censoring specific people. The Daily is promoting inequalities on the basis of ideology. As for whether "it's worth anyone's time to count words" (Matthew Paterson, Letters, Dec. 2), if it's a matter of discrimination, the answer is obviously yes. Please, this is a university; let's not denigrate research. (Whether it's worth the Daily's time to have this policy is an unaddressed matter.)

It is disturbing that I have been personally attacked over that issue of discrimination, while others can falsely cry discrimination and force student societies to deprive needy patients of life-giving blood. The Red Cross' not allowing certain persons to give blood may appear to be discriminatory, while arbitrarily enforcing a policy of censorship may not. Scratching beneath the surface reveals otherwise; giving blood is not a privilege, as it is recipient oriented.

The Red Cross' questionnaire is not perfect. It should be refined. Nevertheless,

less, it is not discriminatory, and the Red Cross should not be boycotted because of it. I can think of organizations (specifically a certain newspaper) that do discriminate, and against which action would be more appropriate.

Jeremy Michelson
U3 Science

P.S. Funny: "one would think that [Linda Tria], especially at the end of term, would have [had] more to do than complain about [letters]." (Letters, Dec. 2)

ed. note — we appreciate the fact that your letter is exactly 299 words. If you disagree with our letters policy and would like to lodge a formal complaint, our open meetings are held every Thursday at 17h30.

Marriott Garbage Bags

To the Daily

I happened to notice today that Shatner cafeteria uses Union Carbide garbage bags. Were they not responsible for the Bhopal disaster? Is there a more sensitive (and sensible) alternative out there anywhere? If so, perhaps the student body should pressure Marriott to use it. No?

Rakia Faber
Arts U1

NOTES FROM BELOW

The Daily would like to thank all of the folks at Macdonald College for the generous use of their sheep this past week. Beh beh, it wouldn't have been the same without them.

SINCE 1911
Vol. 83, No. 50

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THE MCGILL DAILY

Struggling with the "killer system"

University in the West Indies goes halfway with the semester system

BY MELANIE NEWTON

Christmas usually finds Canadian and American university students taking a break from their books.

For the past three years at the University of the West Indies (UWI) however, students spent much of their holiday studying in preparation for exams in early January.

While this is not unusual at British universities where exams take place at the beginning of the second term, exams at most North American schools finish in time for Christmas.

The situation is unique because the UWI semester system is modelled after that used in North American universities.

In September 1990, UWI, which has campuses in Barbados, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, replaced the old British trimester system, still used in Caribbean secondary schools, with the new system.

Change unpopular

If last December's demonstration at the law faculty of Barbados' Cave Hill campus is any indication however, the new system has yet to meet student approval.

Almost every student in law demonstrated, shouting "Yes, yes, the semester system is a mess!"

The protesters voiced the displeasure of their peers in several other faculties, who complained that the system has not been properly implemented.

They also claim they are suffering because of the system's inadequacies.

Other students say that while they wait for the administration to do something, they struggle under a vastly increased workload and compete for university resources which cannot meet increased demand.

In a letter to the law faculty dean in November, President of the Law Society Keith Scotland expressed the complaints of many students. He argued that although the length of courses had been reduced from three terms to one semester, the amount of work to be covered has been largely unaltered.

One 1993 social sciences graduate who studied under both systems repeated a course after the system's implementation in 1990 after flunking it the year before.

"In the first year, we did 22 chapters of the text in one year. With the new system, we did 20 chapters of the same book in one semester. So, we did the same work in 12 weeks that we used to do in eight months," said the 21 year old graduate.

Compromising education?

A second year law student feels that not only is passing exams harder, but the quality of learning has also declined. She does not see how it is possible to learn as much under the new system.

"This semester started on September 23 and supposedly ends in January, but the lecturers stop long before December 23. That's ten weeks to learn stuff that it has been proven takes two terms to learn and they just cram it all into one semester that isn't even a real semester in length."

Ahe continued, "All through Christmas we have to study. Students just cram to pass, not to learn. With the level of intelligence of the students we shouldn't have to be cramming to pass."

Students in social sciences and law also complain that the method of evaluation is not flexible but arbitrary.

In the social sciences faculty, lecturers have the choice of whether to give assignments. Exam results can be worth anywhere from 60 to 100 per cent of a final grade. In law, assignments do not

count towards a final grade, and one student says they are generally not given.

"Lecturers are allowed to give up to 40 per cent in course work, but that's the maximum," said the social sciences graduate.

"It is up to the lecturer to decide if they are going to give any course work. There are some lecturers who don't, for whatever reason they can come up with. But some don't teach enough by the time mid-terms come around to give [one]," he added.

Assistant to the university's Pro-Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs Ed Brandon admits that the university tries to "encourage lecturers to put more emphasis on course work", but adds that "we can't force them to do that."

In a commissioned report completed in July and submitted to the university, educational administration consultant John Hamilton House, suggested that the university remove the ceiling on the value of course work.

In many North American universities using the semester system, there is a minimum, rather than a maximum limit on how much course work can be worth.

Who's idea was this anyway?

There has been increased pressure on libraries because the semester system allows students to take twice as many courses in a year.

However students and in House reports say libraries were not ready to deal with the increased demand.

"We are getting problems because our library resources are not up to par. They haven't increased the number of books or reduced the borrowing time," said G. Arthur Smith, a member of the Guild of Undergraduates.

In light of all the problems which accompanied the new system many students wonder why it was implemented in the first place.

House pointed out that nowhere in the initial proposal is an explicit reason given for the system's implementation. The closest thing to a reason, he said, is a list of the system's perceived pros and cons.

In the House report, the pros seem to have won on paper.

Brandon said "one advantage was to get closer to the typical North American structure, in terms of staff wanting to do an exchange with another university."

However, as Brandon admitted, this has not been achieved.

The House report suggests that exactly the opposite has occurred. At present, the semesters are so out of sync with those of other universities "particularly with those in North America", that faculty exchanges are almost impossible.

Some students claim that the system was introduced without any input from them. In 1989, the Guild of Undergraduates submitted recommendations about when the semester system should start and finish.

"Then, lo and behold, we heard that the semester system was coming into effect," said a graduate student who was very active in the Guild at the time.

According to the student, all of the Guild's recommendations were ignored.

The House report noted that the system seems to have been introduced in spite of opposition from several faculties on all three campuses.

The report went on to say that in 1990, officials

in the social sciences faculty found the task of restructuring to be "enormous" and did not think that either lecturers or libraries had enough time to make the necessary changes.

Although the faculty has since supported the decision, the report describes the faculty as being "unsatisfied" with the results.

Natural Sciences thought the decision was "premature", and, according to House, there is "still resistance and resentment to the change".

While the Faculty of Education seems to have had no trouble adjusting, it thought the potential benefits were so inconsequential as to make the change unnecessary.

Faculty members feel that since 1990, faculties have not co-operated well in helping each other to adjust.

A benefit or two

Despite the difficulties, the consensus among students and administrators seems to be the new system offers greater flexibility.

According to one social sciences graduate, "it gave a wider degree of course choices. Instead of doing a year of this and a year of that, you could do a semester and then pick up something else."

Students still feel they have no direct input in the decision making.

"Students are represented on various boards, and they are supposed to bring any complaints they have to the attention of the board. But they don't have a lot of faith in the bureaucracy. There are sympathetic ears but you get this feeling that nothing will actually be done," said one student.

According to G. Arthur Smith, although students are dissatisfied, the general attitude on campus is one of resignation.

"People agree that it is a killer system. But most students seem to have resigned themselves to it," said Smith.

For now, the administration does plan to review the system. It is looking into the 24 recommendations for improvement made in the House report, which would bring it more in line with the North American model.

Significantly, these recommendations include an avenue of expressing complaints for students. Currently students cannot assess tenured lecturers. Another suggestion is removing the ceiling on how much course work can be worth in a final grade.

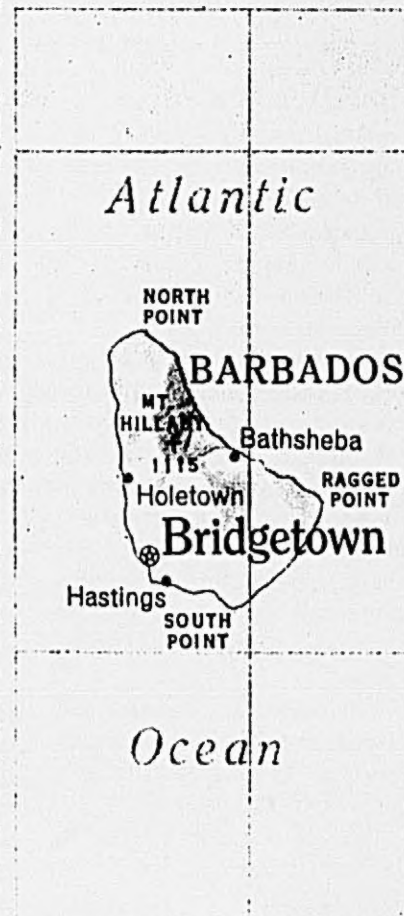
The House report agreed with many of those interviewed, that the current exam system and method of course evaluation needs to be changed.

Until then, however, students still feel as though they are getting the shaft from the administration. Some think that with revision the semester system can work.

However, others aren't so sure.

"You have students who come in here with five A's at A Level, and they can't even get one A under this system. I have one friend who after one semester called a taxi to take her to the mental hospital," said the second year law student.

"There's been one first class honours [student] in law in the last ten years," she continued. "There probably won't be another one now for the next 20 years, or until they abolish the semester system."



Students at UWI's Cave Hill campus fought against the new system

Students and universities are going broke

Can we learn from how other countries fund post-secondary education?

BY KAREN LOO

Tuition fees are increasing as fast as government funding to universities is sliding away. The present strategies for financing Canadian post-secondary education are being increasingly called into question.

How does Canada's imperfect system compare to alternative funding methods? The American privatization route, or the Income Contingency Loan Repayment Plans (ICLRP) pursued by Australia and Sweden provide other solutions to the problem.

The general sentiment is that Canada must improve the system it already has. Many believe that privatization and Income Contingency plans will not better the situation but may actually worsen it.

Moneybags U: The American Way

The American system tempers huge tuition bills with generous financial aid programs.

Andrew Work, vp external of the Students' Society, compared the Canadian and American systems of post-secondary education.

"The Americans have a two-tiered system, and so consequently, they have universities that we simply cannot compete with, given our budgets. But then again, I'd say that the average Canadian university is far above and beyond many of their smaller colleges and universities. We're walking the middle of the road as opposed to the two extremes."

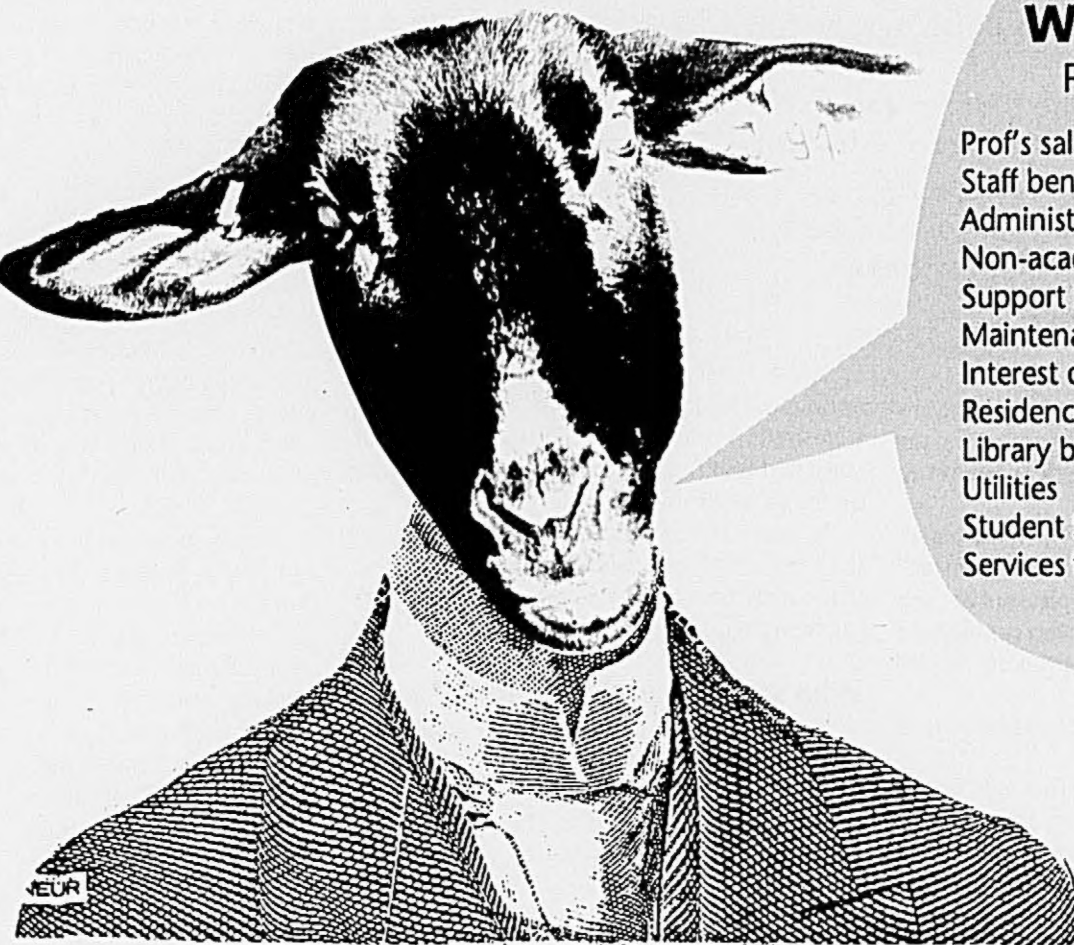
While tuition in Canadian universities averages \$2 000, private American universities charge as much as \$19 000 per year.

Eric Laferriere, vp external for the Post-Graduate Student Society (PGSS) finds the American system "highly unacceptable."

"We do not think that it [privatization] is socially progressive at all because it maintains a system of polarization between those who can afford education and those who can't," said Laferriere.

"Students should not pay for their own education through tuition fees...we believe that education is a public good. As a public good, then society should be paying for it because all sectors of society benefit from education. This is why we are advocating zero tuition."

Laferriere also expressed PGSS's fear that Canadian universities and



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Staff benefits	\$88.32
Administration	\$39.24
Non-academic salaries	\$58.88
Support Staff	\$78.48
Maintenance and Repairs	\$39.24
Interest on \$72m debt	\$9.81
Residences and Dining Halls	\$46.35
Library books	\$10.13
Utilities	\$21.94
Student Services	\$14.08
Services for the Community	\$4.03

governments are capitulating to vague forces, such as the globalization of markets.

"This logic of competition [having to compete on a national basis] and of producing specific results from education is very much the language of the corporate sector. We find that this could be quite dangerous because it is a concept of excellence which is, in essence, quite exclusionary."

However, according to Caryn Duncan, a researcher for the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS), there is also much more money available to American students in the forms of bursaries and grants.

Duncan compared the Canadian and American financial aid programs. She said, "Our system, ironically, is more uniform than theirs. We argue that it needs to be even more uniform in Canada because we see inequities from region to region."

Duncan mentioned the differences between provincial financial assistance programs as an example. The actual amount of money devoted to education differs between provinces. As well, only certain provinces fund grant programs.

"We have provincial governments which only offer student loans," said Duncan. "We need the

federal government to coordinate a national grants program, so that all students have access to non-repayable funding for post-secondary education."

Duncan called the American system of financial assistance a "hodge-podge system."

She said that the American financial aid plans differ too much between various states and institutions, and argued that the system was "just a very complicated maze."

"There are different funding levels in terms of the availability of American student assistance...The Americans sort of target them [financial assistance programs]. They tailor-make their programs, more than we do up here," Duncan added.

Sweden & Australia: ICLR

Caryn Duncan believes that the system by which Canadian universities are funded needs to be improved, but she sees no hope in an Income Contingent Loan Repayment Plan (ICLRP).

"I would argue very strongly against an overhaul [of the present system], say based on an Income Contingency Repayment model, which I am completely against. There are so many problems with Income Contingency."

Serge Charlebois, spokesperson for l'Organisation Nationale Universitaire (ONU) and president of the Fédération Etudiante Universitaire du Québec (FEUQ), supports the proposal of a Canadian ICLR.

"Income contingency is a means we [the ONU] have underlined to address the problem of accessibility to post-secondary education."

Charlebois clarified that, "a post-graduate tax that neutralizes the negative effects on accessibility, must not serve to increase tuition fees by releasing the government from its funding role."

He admitted that other factors are as important in restructuring the Canadian funding of universities.

In reference to *Compromising Access*, a study released by the CFS, Charlebois said, "There are other short term plans which must be put into action. They are to increase corporate contributions and to decrease administrative expenses."

Laferriere, of the PGSS, agrees that a corporate tax would be a proper way of to solve the problem of underfunding. However, he warns against direct investment from the private sector, which could cause problems of control over university agenda.

"If you enforce formal links between the private sectors and the universities, it might be good because you would inject funds, and specific programs might be put into place...devising a particular social system which is respectable of corporate goals. Then there are a lot of sectors that will be neglected, like the social sciences and humanities."

Judy Stymest, Director of the Office of Student Aid and International Student Advisor, said that although an Income Contingency system makes money available to students without a need assessment, the plan also transfers the cost of education from the taxpayer to the student.

Stymest stressed that with an ICLR, users end up paying back "the general fund of outstanding loans."

"I think that one thing which is not well understood is that you do not pay your own personal loan through the income tax system, you pay the loans from the income tax system."

Stymest also said, "When you look at university budgets being slashed, it's hard to imagine that it won't have a direct effect on the quality of education."

The double edge of apprenticeships

BY PHIL ASHTON

Talkabounds within government, business, organized labour, and academic circles about the need to prepare the labour force for the economic challenges of the 21st century.

As plants close down and the stability of entire industries is undermined, workers and households are being asked to play their part in rebuilding Canada's competitive advantage.

The key to success apparently lies in greater partnership between business and education. Corporations are advocating new training techniques to meet market demands for flexibility.

"The new corporate strategy empowers employees to take greater responsibility, make decisions, and be entrepreneurial," said Anita Ross, Vice-President of personnel with IBM Canada. "Since empowered employees must be very well educated, the system needs to produce qualified graduates who are flexible and adaptable."

In universities and technical schools, new options for students are developing out of greater collaboration with businesses. Originally conceived to provide alternative learning forums and to break down the dichotomy between theory and practice, co-op and apprenticeship programs are now providing access to the advanced technologies and sophisticated work situations which universities and technical schools cannot afford.

Apprenticeships also provide work experience for students — experience which is crucial to managerial and technical positions.

Participants in co-op programs attest to the valuable skills they learned on the job. "I gained a much deeper understanding of which professional issues are pertinent," says Daniel Haufschild, a graduate student in Urban Planning who underwent a four-month practicum in the public sector this past summer.

"I would definitely say that my experiences will help me in my future job searches."

Meeting the demand through co-ops

Canada has a poor showing compared with industrialized countries in the area of highly-skilled labour. Employment and Immigration Canada reported that in 1990, Canada had only 90 scientists per 100,000 population, compared with 240 in Japan and 280 in the United States. Professional programs are touted as the solution to skilled labour shortages which currently make Canada less attractive to high-tech firms.

Canada's real future in the global economy however is not held within the paradigm of co-op success.

Restructuring at the Weston Bakery in Longueuil reveals the problems inherent in the "new corporate strategy". As part of the largest corporate conglomeration in

Canada, the company decided to invest in its future by automating much of its production in 1990.

"This meant that two-thirds of its production jobs disappeared," said Gaetan Lussier, President of Weston Bakeries (Québec).

Rather than laying off unnecessary workers however, Weston entered into an agreement to manage the transition with unions, the local community college, the school board, the Québec government and Employment and Immigration Canada.

"Weston wanted to give employees the chance to stay with the company or find employment elsewhere by retraining them," said Lussier. This involved setting up three stages of retraining: basic education for those lacking literacy and numeracy skills; technical courses in computers and manufacturing technology; and accelerated training in the use of the equipment provided at the retooled plant.

While business leaders such as Lussier see this process as a shining example of a business/education partnership, the Weston Bakeries case is also indicative of the role of vocational training in managed downsizing.

Only one-third of the workers were rehired by Weston to work in the high-tech bakery; the rest were laid off. Although retraining was not required for Weston workers, "employees volunteered for training because they realized that it improves their ability to adjust to change," said Lussier.

Even with retraining, the laid off workers must now compete for the jobs which match their new skills. As Weston's approach to profitability shows, new entrants to the labour market cannot count on an expanding supply of jobs. The new reality is rather that better-educated workers will compete for a limited (and often contracted) supply of technical jobs.

Eric Shragge, professor of social work at McGill, argues that Montréal particularly is facing a future of increasing polarization between high tech and low skill industries.

"The current trend in job creation involves, on the one hand, a relatively small number of jobs that require skills and education based on demands of high technology industries and the other hand, the many new jobs linked to the service sector that are low-wage, low-skill, non-unionized, and irregular," said Shragge. This polarization is worsened by growing competition with low-wage countries.

Government policies worsen situation

The partnership approach will only succeed through government support. Barbara McDougall, former Minister for Employment and Immigration, supported this contention in a speech to the Conference Board of Canada.

"The government must help Canada compete in the global workplace. It is critical to productivity and competitiveness."

Gaetan Lussier of Weston Bakeries agreed. "To be successful, training partnerships must involve the government to develop and fund the programs. Placing a tax on business to force it to provide training is not the solution."

Federal and provincial governments are increasingly expected to pick up the tab for training, as these skilled workers are the basis for profitability in information services and technological industries. Employment and Immigration Canada reports that half of Canadian firms have trouble finding skilled workers, yet three quarters of firms offer no formal training for their employees.

While Employment and Immigration Canada toys with concepts such as "life-long learning" — the practice of government-funded training in the workplace — often reflects another reality. Québec's PAIE, PDE, and EXTRA (EXpérience de TRAvail) programs are perhaps the best Canadian examples of a growing trend in social policy reform.

"The general social policy orientation of the Québec government is reflected in the recent social aide which attempts to create a parallel low wage labour market in the name of job training, and push the poor into jobs that pay even less than minimum wage," explained Shragge.

In these programs which focus on social aide recipients, physically able adults are required to take low wage jobs in the private and non-profit sectors. Participation in the program earns the recipient \$100 extra on their welfare cheque — refusal to participate results in a reduction of their benefits. The positions created run for only six months.

Refocusing income supports in this way is politically attractive for governments. The business need for cheap labour is met, while international bond markets, and middle- and upper-class taxpayers are assured that the government is trying to live within its means.

The current government stewardship of the labour force however, integrates the unemployed and the poor in a "sink or swim" manner, not by choice and empowerment.

According to a 1991 study by the Doris Marshall Institute for Education in Toronto, "the more dynamic, technocratic pole equips a leadership for its ruling role and assigns the majority to their slots, the narrow tasks needed to reproduce the system. Under the guise of 'hard facts', technocratic educators convince adult learners that those in charge belong there by virtue of their expertise, and that learners' choices need to be 'realistic' within the framework of the status quo."

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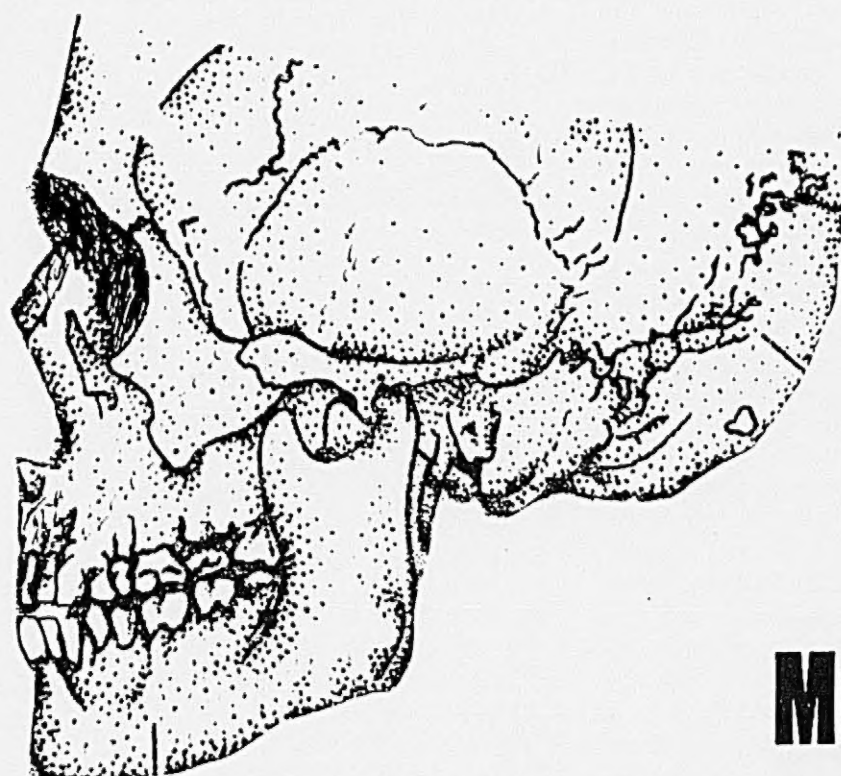
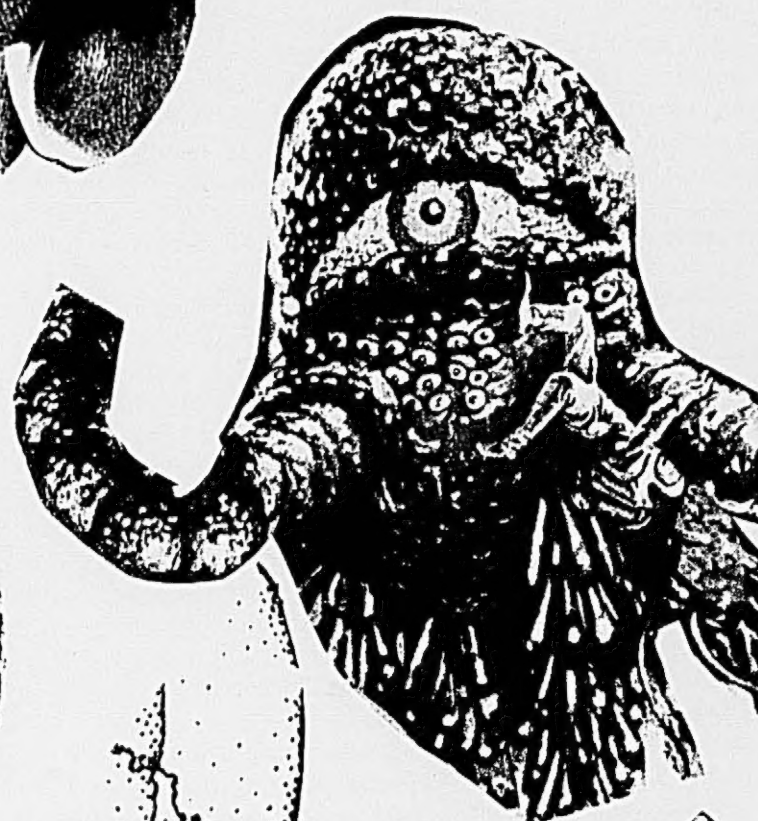
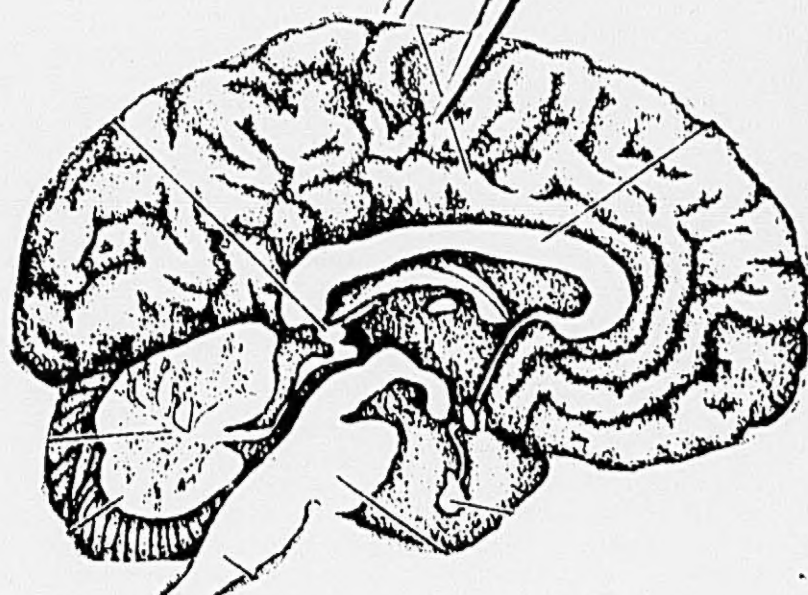
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